

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

Chapter 31

Ephesians 5:22–30

Ephesians 5:22–23 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

²³For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, Eph. 5:23) *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.*—It is instructive to compare this with the partly similar passage in 1 Corinthians 11:3.¹ There “the head of the woman is the man,” as here; but “the head of every man (individually) is Christ,” considered in His human nature; and finally, “the Head of Christ,” as the Son of Man, “is God.” There, accordingly, “headship” is simple lordship; the woman is subject to the man, the man is subject to Christ alone; Christ as the Son is subject to the Father. (END QUOTE)

IT is not surprising in a sinful world such as ours is, that many wives have chosen to throw off the authority of their husbands, in roughly equal proportion husbands have similarly refused the Lordship of Jesus Christ over their lives. Spiritual rebellion breeds spiritual rebellion, and nowhere is this more evidenced than in the family unit. Yet, the Word of God is clear on this important subject—that the husband is the head of the wife, in the same relationship that Jesus Christ is

the Head of the church. Accordingly, in order for sweetness, unity, and joy to be evidenced in the marriage relationship, the wife's submission to her husband is fundamental in achieving this.

(*Expositor's Greek New Testament*) Reason for a wifely subjection of the kind indicated. It is found in the relation of headship. In the marriage union the husband holds the same relation, *viz.*, that of headship, as Christ holds to the Church, and the headship of the one represents the headship of the other. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

The spiritual pattern of the church's subjection to the Son of God, is the degree, and the high level of being subject, that is also purposed to define the wife's spiritual responsibility to her husband. Undoubtedly God's Word is remarkably clear, and poignant on this subject, that *as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing*. This verse also draws our attention to the gravity and seriousness of the subjection principle in the marriage relationship. Since also submission and subjection, first to God² and then to others

¹ 1 Cor. 11:3 *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

² Jas. 4:7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

1 Pet. 5:6 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

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in Christ,³ is not a small thing. The difference in marriage, though, regarding the wife's submission to her husband, is that her subjection is purposed to be a much higher form of subjection, than even being subject to other Christians, in the church. Ultimately there is not a higher standard in Scripture that reveals the principle of biblical subjection, more than the subjection of the church to Christ, which is to be mirrored, in the wife's earthly subjection to her husband. This undoubtedly is an important spiritual truth, and worthy to be meditated upon.

What is also necessary to be considered, is that if the husband abrogates, abandons, and rejects his spiritual responsibility, through refusing Jesus Christ's Lordship over his own life, he should not feel he still retains the biblical right, to self-righteously demand, his wife's total devotion and subjection to himself. Since many a sinful and ungodly husband has attempted to abuse what the Scripture reveals here, concerning his wife's role in the marriage, while at the same time, disregarding and totally negating his own spiritual responsibility, that of being under God's divine rule.

(Pulpit Commentary, Eph. 5:24) But [it exists so far as to enforce this exhortation] as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything. Let there be a subjection in the one case parallel to that in the other, for such is the Divine will and purpose. Any subjection due to the husband must be modified by what is due to God, for as the husband may not require for himself, so the wife may not give to him, what is God's: God's will is paramount over all. Of the three wills that may be in collision, viz. God's, the husband's, and the wife's—the

duty of the wife is to take them in this order, having regard first to God's, next to her husband's, and last to her own. (END QUOTE)

(Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Eph. 5:24) in every thing] In all relations and interests. This great rule will always, of course, be over-ruled by supreme allegiance to Christ; but its spirit will never be violated in the Christian home. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Once the apostle reveals the subjection required by the wife to her husband, now he further reveals the great principle which will encourage her to continue and even grow in spiritual subjection to himself—the reason is, because of his divine love for her. This verse clearly reveals, that *love* is the foundation, upon which all genuine submission and subjection, should rest. Through the husband loving the wife as Christ loved the church, and as himself, then this makes it much more pleasant and joyful for the wife to fulfill her own submissive and subject role in the marriage. Because also love and submission are scripturally bound, then to throw one out, is to greatly hinder the success, and ultimate godly purpose of the other. A truly godly husband also should never be content with his wife merely pleasing himself, as most ungodly husbands easily are content with, without her first, and foremost, seeking to please her Savior.

The high spiritual standard of the wife's submission to her husband, is equally weighty regarding the husband's biblical role and charge to love his wife, as

³ *1 Pet. 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Heb. 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Eph. 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

Christ loves the church. Thus, in a truly godly marriage the wife's submission to her husband, should be equally paralleled in importance by the husband loving her, as Christ does the church. Undoubtedly, love and submission are two of the most crucial elements needed to form a happy and fulfilled Christian marriage. To throw out either, is to cause great harm to the spiritual union, which God has divinely joined together. (Mark 10:7-9) *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

(Bengel's *Gnomen*, Mark 10:9) Whatsoever God doeth and ordaineth, it is man's part to regard as an established principle. It is an impiety to accept as authoritative what God rejects; or to approve of what God censures. (END QUOTE)

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, Eph. 5:25) *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church.*—The love of Christ for His Church is such that He counts Himself incomplete without her (Ephesians 1:23⁴), and raises her to be one with Himself; that He bears with her weakness and frailty; that He draws her on by the cords of love; and that He gives up Himself for her. Only so far as the husband shows the like love in perfect sympathy, in chivalrous forbearance, in abhorrence of tyranny, in willingness to

self-sacrifice, has he any right to claim lordship. (END QUOTE)

Where divine love does not exist as the grounds for exercising authority by the husband, then there has undeniably been an abuse of the spiritual authority God has given him. It is also worth noting that no husband should view his authority in the marriage as absolute, and especially so if he himself refuses to accept God's divine authority over his own life. With authority comes responsibility, and there is no place in God's Word where any authority over others, should not be ruled by the love of God in our hearts. (Rom. 13:10) *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Now we observe the practical action of Jesus dying for, and loving the church; it was so that *he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*

For the bride of Christ,⁵ to be sufficiently worthy of Christ, then she needed to be sanctified and cleansed from all sin, by Him. This was the ultimate purpose for Jesus descending from heaven to the earth, in order that those called to God through Himself⁶ could be sufficiently sanctified for entrance into heaven. It is also the Son's sanctification of Himself, that enables Him to consecrate and cleanse, those who in their earthly and

4 Eph. 1:23 *Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

5 Rev. 19:7-8 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* ⁸*And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

Rev. 21:9 *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

6 I Cor. 1:9 *God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

I Pet. 5:10 *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

Rom. 1:6 *Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:*

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carnal state, are born both unrighteous⁷ and unholy.⁸ (John 17:19) *And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, John 17:19) *And for their sakes I sanctify myself.*—Comp. Note on John 17:17.⁹ The consecration here thought of is that to the work which was immediately before Him—the offering Himself as a sacrifice. The word was in frequent use in the special sense of an offering or sacrifice set apart to God. As a New Testament example of this, comp. Romans 15:16.¹⁰ By this consecration of Himself—which in a wider sense is for all men, but in the special sense is “for their sakes”—He will, as both Priest and Sacrifice, enter into the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple, and will send the Holy Ghost, who will consecrate them.

That they also might be sanctified through the truth.—Better, as in the margin, ... *might be truly sanctified.* The words “they also” are emphatic, answering to “their sakes” and “myself” in the preceding clause. (END QUOTE)

It was the ultimate purpose of God in the beginning, that those *chosen* in Christ, should be *holy and without blame before him [God] in love.* (Eph. 1:4) *According as he hath chosen us in him before the*

foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: This was the heavenly purpose for Jesus consecrating Himself, through the earthly life He lived, and the sacrificial death he suffered. Because of Christ's personal sanctification and consecration of Himself, the church, through His redemptive work, now possess a solid heavenly standing of being able to stand unashamed and holy and without blame, before the throne of grace.¹¹ This is a staggering Christian revelation, yet biblically, spiritually and unequivocally true, nonetheless.

(*Pulpit Commentary*, John 17:19) *And for their sakes—on their behalf—I sanctify, consecrate, myself.* The Father had consecrated him and sent him into the world, but over and above all this there were special and sacrificial acts of love and devotion which he made on behalf of his own. He went up voluntarily into the wilderness to be tempted for them; he wrought for them while it was yet day. He now was ready to commend himself to the supreme will of the Father, and to offer himself through the Spirit in his perfected humanity without spot of sin to God. (Hag-ee-ad'-zo) ἁγιάζω is equivalent προσφέρω σοὶ θυσίαν, as Chrysostom says, and it is used for (kawdash') עֲדַשְׁתִּי (Exodus 13:2; Deuteronomy 15:19).¹² Christ is the Priest and the Victim, and the dedication of himself to

7 Rom. 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

Ps. 51:5 *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

Eccl. 7:20 *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*

Rom. 5:19 *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

8 Eph. 2:3 *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

Isa. 64:6 *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

9 John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

10 Rom. 15:16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

11 Heb. 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

12 Exod. 13:2 *Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.*

Deut. 15:19 *All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.*

this climax of his consecrated life is for the sake of the disciples (so Lange, Meyer, Godet, and Westcott). *That they also may be sanctified indeed*—truly or veritably. (END QUOTE)

In regard to the husband's role in the marriage, it is essential that he, like Christ, pursues sanctification in his own life, so that he might properly lead his wife. One of the means by which this purification is gained, is through obedience, subjection, and complete devotion, to God. By doing this, spiritual holiness will increasingly grow in him, and he will eventually possess the spiritual purity necessary to properly lead his wife. Ultimately, all Christian service, demands—similar to priests in the Old Testament,¹³—a level of purification and cleansing to take place, before any holy service could be performed. Thus in the Christian marriage the husband's continued pursuit of holiness in his own life, is essential for him to properly serve the Lord in this capacity.

(Heb. 12:14) *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:* This verse is important, even though it is not directly connected to the Christian marriage. Simply because no man, who disregards pursuing holiness in his own life, will ever truly see the Lord, or can ultimately be saved by Him.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Heb. 12:14) *Follow peace with all men*—... This is the temper of the gospel. We are to make war

with sin, but not with people; with bad passions and corrupt desires, but not with our fellow-worms.

And holiness—Instead of yielding to contending passions and to a spirit of war; instead of seeking revenge on your persecutors and foes, make it rather your aim to be holy. Let that be the object of your pursuit; the great purpose of your life. Men might in such cases counsel them to seek revenge; the spirit of religion would counsel them to strive to be holy. In such times they were in great danger of giving indulgence to evil passions, and hence, the special propriety of the exhortation to endeavor to be holy. (END QUOTE)

When both the husband and wife pursue holiness in their own lives, then they shall collectively grow together in increased personal sight and perception of God. As evidenced in this verse, holiness and peace are joined together, and as such, when one grows, the other will similarly become more evident in the heart. But if either the husband or wife fail to genuinely and sincerely pursue God's holiness, then they shall never be brought to know the Lord, or generally even understand the Lord's distinct standards for salvation. Ultimately to not pursue the Lord's holiness, and not be ashamed of our own uncleanness, is to forfeit salvation itself.

With the washing of water by the word.

(*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, Eph. 5:26) *with the washing of water*—rather as Greek, “with,” or “by the laver of the water,”

¹³ *Exod. 29:4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.*

Exod. 29:21 And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

Lev. 8:6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.

Lev. 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

Lev. 21:10 And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;

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namely, the baptismal water. So it ought to be translated in Tit 3:5,¹⁴ the only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs. As the bride passed through a purifying bath before marriage, so the Church (compare Re 21:2¹⁵). ...

by the word—Greek, “IN the word.” ... “Take away the word, and what is the water save water? Add the word to the element, and it becomes a sacrament, being itself as it were the visible word.” The regenerating efficacy of baptism is conveyed in, and by, the divine word alone. (END QUOTE)

It is surely not mere earthly water that cleanses the sinner from his sin. If that were the case, then John’s external baptism of water,¹⁶ would have been adequately sufficient for entrance into heaven, absent the much greater spiritual baptism, which was to be ushered in by the One John said was greater than himself.¹⁷ This, divine baptism performed by Jesus Christ, agrees with Jesus’ words to Nicodemus, that without being *born again*, and/or born from above, no man will either see, or be allowed entrance into the kingdom

of God. (John 3:3) *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

(*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, John 3:3) *Except a man*—This is a universal form of expression designed to include all mankind. Of “each and every man” it is certain that unless he is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It includes, therefore, men of every character and rank, and nation, moral and immoral, rich and poor, in office and out of office, old and young, bond and free, the slave and his master, Jew and Gentile. It is clear that our Saviour intended to convey to Nicodemus the idea, also, that “he” must be born again. It was not sufficient to be a Jew, or to acknowledge him to be a teacher sent by God that is, the Messiah; it was necessary, in addition to this, to experience in his own soul that great change called the “new birth” or regeneration. (END QUOTE)

Jesus’ spiritual baptism of the Holy Spirit, is the only remedy to properly cleanse the sinner’s heart¹⁸ where sin ultimately lives and operates,¹⁹ to destroy men’s lives.

14 Titus 3:5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

15 Rev. 21:2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

16 Mark 1:8 *I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*

Luke 3:16 *John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:*

Acts 1:5 *For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

17 Matt. 3:11 *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:*

18 Ezek. 11:19 *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:*

Ezek. 36:26 *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

Jer. 31:33 *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

19 Jer. 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Gen. 6:5-7 *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

With the washing of water by the word. It is the Son of God, represented as the Word made flesh,²⁰ Who ultimately purifies the soul,²¹ and cleanses the sinner's heart from sin.²² Ultimately both the living²³ and written Word²⁴ are indispensable for gaining God's salvation.²⁵ Since together both are representatives of God, and shall equally accomplish His heavenly purpose in people's lives. (Ps. 119:9) *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

(Benson Commentary, Ps. 119:9) Psalm 119:9. *Wherewith shall a young man*—Or, any man. But he names the *young man*, because such are commonly void of wisdom and experience, and exposed to many and

great temptations. *Cleanse his way*—Reform his life, or purge himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. *By taking heed thereto*—By diligently and circumspectly watching over himself, and examining and regulating all his dispositions and actions by the rule of thy word. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

A glorious church. The Greek word for *glorious* is #1741 (en'-dox-os) *endoxos*. HELPS Words-studies defines the word "éndoksos (from the prefix, 1722 / (en) en, 'engaged in,' which intensifies 1391 / (dox'-ah) *dóksa* ('glory, inherent worth')—

Matt. 15:18-19 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Mark 7:20-23 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

20 John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Rev. 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

21 Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

I John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Heb. 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

22 Eph. 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Matt. 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

23 John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

24 II Tim. 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

II Pet. 1:20-21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Gal. 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

25 Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Jas. 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

I Pet. 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Ps. 107:20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

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properly, ‘in glory,’ expressing the dignity (exalted status) of something and viewed ‘in a state of high honor and repute.’”

It is not simply that believers will enter heaven, but they also shall be counted as members of Jesus’ glorified body,²⁶ a heavenly body of those redeemed from sin, and who shall ultimately be glorified together with the Son of God.²⁷

(*Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*, Eph. 5:27) *That he might present it to himself.*—The original is more emphatic—that He might Himself present it to Himself. This presentation belonged usually to the “paranymph,” or “friend of the bridegroom,” to whom St. John Baptist compares himself in John 3:29²⁸ (where see Note); St. Paul himself assumes that office in 2Corinthians 11:2,

“I have espoused (or rather, betrothed) you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” Here, however, all is of Christ. He, as Paranymph,²⁹ comes down to seek and to save His Bride; He, as Bridegroom, receives her in His heavenly home.

A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle ... —Properly, (that He might present) the Church as glorious, not having a spot (i.e., a stain on its purity), or a wrinkle (i.e., a defect in its beauty and freshness of life); but that it may be holy (not merely consecrated to holiness) and without blemish (as He is without blemish). On these last words see Note on Ephesians 1:4.³⁰ ...

In all this we have a picture which properly belongs to the Church in glory, and which is fully drawn out under the same metaphor as Revelation 19:7–9; Revelation 21:2; Rev-

26 *1 Cor. 12:27* Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

27 *Rom. 8:29–30* For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. *Col. 3:4* When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Heb. 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Rom. 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

28 *John 3:29* He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

29 The term “paranymph” originates from ancient Greek, combining the prefix para- (“beside” or “alongside”) and nymphē (“bride”). It originally referred to the groomsman who accompanied the groom to fetch the bride or the bridesmaid who escorted the bride to the groom. Today, the term is often used for a bridesmaid or best man, and its usage has evolved to include a ceremonial role as support for a doctoral candidate during their defense, a Dutch tradition where a PhD is seen as a “marriage” to the university. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Ancient Greek roots: The word comes from the Greek *paránymphos*, which literally means “person beside the bride”. [2, 3]

Original meaning: In ancient Greece, a paranymph was a male friend of the bridegroom who helped escort the bride home, or a female friend who guided the bride to her groom. [1, 3]

Modern usage: In modern English, the term can be a synonym for “best man” or “bridesmaid”. [1, 6]

Dutch PhD tradition: The term also has a specific, ceremonial use in the Netherlands, where PhD candidates are supported by two or more “paranymphs” during their defense. This tradition stems from the historical view of obtaining a doctorate as a marriage to the university. [4, 5]

[1] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/paranymph>

[2] <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/paranymph>

[3] <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/paranymph>

[4] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paranymph>

[5] <https://www.gildeprint.nl/en/2024/05/09/role-paranymph-promotion/>

[6] <https://www.facebook.com/GrandiloquentWords/posts/grandiloquent-word-of-the-day-paranymphpairuhnimfnoun-a-bridesmaid-or-best-man-a/1658368640844756/>

Google AI. (2025, November 10). *Response about the term “paranymph.”* Google AI. Retrieved from <https://ai.google.com>

30 *Eph. 1:4* According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

elation 21:9-10;³¹ for only in it can the description be fully realised. In capacity and promise it belongs to the whole Church militant; in reality, but in imperfection, to the Church invisible on earth; in absolute perfection to the Church triumphant in heaven. (END QUOTE)

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 5:27) *A glorious church*—A church full of honor, splendor, beauty. The idea of “shining,” or of being “bright,” would convey the sense here. Probably there is still here an allusion to a bride “adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:2; compare Psalm 45:9-14³²); and the ideal is, that the church will be worthy of the love of the bridegroom, to whom it will then be presented.

Not having spot—Not having a stain, a defect, or any impurity—still retaining the allusion to a bride, and to the care taken to remove every blemish.

Or wrinkle.—In the vigor and beauty of youth like a bride in whom there is no wrinkle of age.

Or any such thing—Nothing to deform, disfigure, or offend. To this beautiful illustration of the final glory of the church, the apostle

was led by the mention of the relation of the husband and the wife. (END QUOTE)

In regards to the Greek word translated *spot*, #4696 (spee'-los) *spilos*, a lexical summary of the word states that it means “1. a stain or blemish / 2. (figuratively) defect, disgrace.”³³ The *Topical Lexicon* states, regarding (spee'-los) *spilos*, “The term translated ‘spot, stain, blemish’ appears only twice in the Greek New Testament, yet it gathers up a rich biblical theme: the contrast between defiling corruption and God-wrought purity. Whether describing false teachers who pollute fellowship or the radiant Bride cleansed by Christ, the word underscores the divine intention that nothing mar the holiness of His people.”³⁴ (END QUOTE)

The Greek word for *wrinkle* in this verse is #4512 (HROO-tees) *rhutis*. The *Topical Lexicon* defines the word (HROO-tees) (ῥυτίδα, *rhutída*) as something that “denotes a ‘wrinkle,’ a tiny fold or creasing that mars an otherwise smooth surface. Scripture employs the term metaphorically to describe anything that blurs pristine perfection, particularly in the moral and relational beauty of the redeemed com-

31 Rev. 19:7-9 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. Rev. 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

Rev. 21:9-10 *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*

32 Rev. 21:2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

Ps. 45:9-14 *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. 10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; 11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. 12 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.*

¹³ *The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. 14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.*

33 Strong's Greek: 4696 *spilos* – Spot, Blemish.” *BibleHub*, <https://biblehub.com/greek/4696.htm>. Accessed 15 Nov. 2025.

34 Jer. 2:22 *For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.*

munity. Usage in Scripture—Only occurrence: Ephesians 5:27—‘so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such blemish, but holy and blameless.’ / Paul situates (HROO-tees) ῥυτίδα between ‘spot’ (spee’-los) (σπίλος) and ‘blemish’ (toy-oo’-tos) (τί τουτουῦ), forming a triad that intensifies the call to absolute purity for the bride of Christ. ... (HROO-tees) ῥυτίδα serves as a vivid reminder that Christ’s redemptive work aims at nothing less than flawless beauty in His people. The eradication of every ‘wrinkle’ portrays the consummation of grace, inviting believers to pursue holiness now in anticipation of the radiant unveiling yet to come.” (END QUOTE)

When we observe the terminology of *not having spot or wrinkle* this reveals the perfection of Jesus’ work, in wholly, perfectly, and completely transforming those saved by Him.

But that it should be holy and without blemish. To further emphasize the redemptive work of the Son of God, the apostle now proceeds to reveal that Christ’s body—the church, those He has grafted into being part of Himself³⁵—shall ultimately be declared *holy and without blemish* before God.

The Greek word for *holy* is #40 (hag’-ee-os) *hagios*. *HELPS Word-studies* defines the word “properly, different (unlike), other (‘otherness’), holy; for the believer, 40 (hag’-ee-os) (*hágios*) means ‘likeness of nature with the Lord’ because ‘different from the world.’ / The fundamental (core) meaning of 40 (hag’-ee-os) (*hágios*) is ‘different’—thus a temple in the 1st century was *hagios* (hag’-ee-os) (‘holy’) because different from other buildings (Wm. Barclay). In the NT, 40 /*hágios* (hag’-ee-os) (‘holy’) has the ‘technical’ meaning ‘different from the world’ because ‘like the Lord.’” (END QUOTE)

The Greek word for *blameless* is #299 (am’-o-mos) *amomos*. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines the word as “without blame, without blemish, faultless. / From (al’-fah) a (as a negative particle) and (mo’-mos) *momos*; unblemished (literally or figuratively)—without blame (blemish, fault, spot), faultless, unblamable.” (END QUOTE)

Again we observe the absolute perfection that will exist in God’s newly adopted sons, once they enter heaven, at the time of Church Triumphant.³⁶ Two have become one, and as such, the glory, beauty, and purity that is the Son of God’s, shall be generously transferred to His celestial bride. He has made her worthy of heaven, and she shall stand clothed, in white rai-

35 Rom. 11:17–24 *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; ¹⁸Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. ¹⁹Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. ²⁰Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: ²¹For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. ²²Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. ²³And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

36 In Protestant theology, the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant together describe two complementary expressions of the one Church. The Church Militant refers to believers on earth who continue to strive for faithfulness and resist the powers of sin and evil. The Church Triumphant consists of the saints in heaven who have finished their earthly pilgrimage and now share in the fullness of God’s glory. Together, these two states highlight both the present struggle and the ultimate hope that unite all God’s people across heaven and earth.

ment similar to Jesus' attire, when seen by Peter, James, and John at Jesus' transfiguration.³⁷ These white garments shall be in contrast to Jesus' red garment when He returns the second time to the earth,³⁸ seen as a robe dipped in blood.³⁹

Ephesians 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

(*Geneva Study Bible*, Eph. 5:28) Another argument: every man loves himself, even by nature: therefore he strives against nature that does not love his wife. (END QUOTE)

(*Expositor's Greek Testament*, Eph. 5:28) The relation of head and body means that the wife is part of the husband's self. To love his wife, therefore, in this character as being his body, is to love himself. It is a love, consequently, not merely of duty, but of nature... (END QUOTE)

(*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, Eph. 5:28) The husband is accordingly to regard his wife as, in a profound and sacred

sense, part and parcel of his own living frame. (END QUOTE)

Jesus' words are plain when He reveals that all who profess themselves as Christian, should love their neighbors as themselves. Yet, as we have learned, in regards to Christian marriage, there is an elevation of this divine love, purposed to be manifest by the husband. So that while believers, and our neighbors in Christ, whom Jesus said we should love as ourselves,⁴⁰ remain separate from us, this is not true once the husband and wife become one in holy matrimony. Now a much more intimate and eternal love should be pursued by the husband toward his wife. Ultimately there can be no actual and true Christian growth, that does not involve both an expansion, and an increase,⁴¹ in growing in Christ's love.⁴² This is because to actually flourish in Christ, and truly mature in Him, will demand, that believer's spiritually grow to love as He loved. No one also is at liberty to change what they believe divine love should be, when it has already been clearly defined in His holy Word.⁴³

37 *Matt. 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

38 *Rev. 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

Rev. 3:4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

Rev. 4:4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Rev. 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Rev. 15:6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

39 *Rev. 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

40 *Mark 12:31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.*

41 *I I Thess. 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*

42 *Phil. 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

43 *I Cor. 13:4-7 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace

(*Pulpit Commentary*, Eph. 5:28) His wife is part of himself, so that not to love her as himself is not only a sin against law, but a sin against nature. (END QUOTE)

Ephesians 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

It is part of a man's natural instinct, to cherish and nurture his own flesh, and all the various needs of it. Hardly any man, as the Scripture reveals, *hated his own flesh*. Because also now the wife is part of the husband, he should love her, in the same manner and degree, that he previously nourished and cherished himself.

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Returning to the spiritual union that exists between the Son of God and the members of His church, the apostle emphasizes the eternal union that even now exists between the church and its Savior.

(*Matthew Poole's Commentary*, Eph. 5:30) *We are members of his body; his mystical body.*

Of his flesh, and of his bones; as Eve was of Adam's, Genesis 2:23;⁴⁴ only that was in a carnal way, this in a spiritual, as by the communication of Christ's flesh and blood to us by the Spirit we are united to him, and members of him. (END QUOTE)

(*Expositor's Greek Testament*, Eph. 5:30) As the first woman derived her physical being from Adam in the way there recorded, so we Christians draw our spiritual being from Christ. (END QUOTE)

Every Christian's spiritual existence, eternal salvation, and earthly abundance, whether in heart, or possessions, is solely due to being born again, and born of God. What is also true is that every true Christian, has his origin, directly related to, and derived from, the second Adam, Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ Thus just as Eve, a woman, derived her origin from the first man, Adam, the church derives its origin from God's second Adam. And just as Eve was brought forth from the original father of all mankind, the first Adam, and his rib, so has every truly saved one, created in Christ Jesus,⁴⁶ are brought forth, through Jesus' bodily death and resurrection, from He, Who will rule mankind. It is because of this truth, that our complete origin is from Christ, that Ephesians reveals, that *we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Eph. 5:30) *Of his flesh, and of his bones*—There is an allusion here evidently to the language which Adam used respecting Eve. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;" Genesis 2:23. It is language which is employed to denote the closeness of the marriage relation, and which Paul applies to the connection between Christ and his people. Of course, it cannot be understood "literally." It is not true literally that our bones are a part of the bones of Christ, or our flesh of his flesh; nor should language ever be used that would imply a miraculous union. It is not a physical union, but a union of attachment; of feeling; of love. If we avoid the notion of a "physical" union, however, it is scarcely possible to use too strong language in describing the union of believers with the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures make use of language which is stronger than that employed to describe any other connection; and there is no union

⁴⁴ Gen. 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

⁴⁵ I Cor. 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

⁴⁶ Eph. 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

of affection so powerful as that which binds the Christian to the Saviour. So strong is it, that he is willing for it to forsake father, mother, and home; to leave his country, and to abandon his possessions; to go to distant lands and dwell among barbarians to make the Redeemer known; or to go to the cross or the stake from simple love to the Saviour. Account for it as people may, there has

been manifested on earth nowhere else so strong an attachment as that which binds the Christian to the cross. It is stronger love that that which a man has for his own flesh and bones; for it makes him willing that his flesh should be consumed by fire, or his bones broken on the wheel rather than deny him. (END QUOTE)